

of Staff of the Air Force, the Director of Legislative Liaison, and numerous other senior military and civilian leaders on issues of the greatest concern to the Air Force and Congress. He has been more than a liaison between the Pentagon and the Hill, he developed and improved key relationships to enable the Congress to make better decisions about the future of the Air Force and our national defense. He is extremely intelligent and articulate, and has helped shape my thinking and influenced many Members of Congress. Simply put, we trust him and will miss him!

Col. McKenzie is a command pilot with over 3,200 flying hours and 630 combat hours in the F-16. He is the recipient of numerous major medals and decorations for his service and accomplishments. The most significant of these include the Defense Superior Service medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, and Meritorious Service medal.

Throughout his distinguished career he has represented our country and the Air Force with dignity and honor, and this is why I'm so privileged to pay tribute to this fine Airman. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Congress and the United States of America, I thank Colonel Patrick T. "Smack" McKenzie, his wife Jennifer, and their daughter Ashley, for their service and sacrifices of the past 26 years. I wish them Godspeed, and continued happiness as they start this new chapter in their lives.

TOM NEUMANN

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my close friend Tom Neumann, a thoughtful, dedicated and respected leader who served as an example for all those who wish to make a meaningful, positive change in our world. Sadly, Tom passed away this week, on September 9, at the age of 69. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife, Agnes, and his entire family.

For more than 30 years, Tom served to help end anti-Semitism, to safeguard democratic principles and to build understanding and support for Israel. He previously served as the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) Southwest Regional Director, ADL's National Director of Community Services and its National Director of the Intergroup Relations Division. At ADL, Tom worked to build friendships and working relationships between Christian and Jewish clergy under the Christian-Jewish Committee for Israel. It was during this time that I traveled to Israel with Tom and when I observed firsthand about the challenges that Israel faces each day and why America must always stand with this ally.

Tom later joined B'nai B'rith International as Executive Vice President where he created a presence for the organization in the USSR and Eastern Europe, an important feat and the first to happen since World War II. In 1991, he served as the Executive Director of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), where he worked until his retirement in 2012. As Executive Director, Tom helped establish JINSA as a prominent voice for U.S. national security ties as well as U.S.-Israel security

ties. Through his leadership, he helped JINSA grow its membership to over 20,000 individuals. His writings on the U.S.-Israel bilateral relationship were published in outlets across the world. For his work, he was recognized as the "6th Most Influential Jewish Leader" by The Forward in 1999. Locally, Tom founded The Houston Center for International Affairs, a business form that focused on international and economic issues, created the Christian/Jewish Committee for Israel, a coalition of inter-denominational clergy who support Israel, and Texas 1990, a dinner discussion group of religious, business and community leaders.

Tom was someone who believed that "people, even more than causes and things, have to be restored, renewed and reclaimed." To those he worked with, he was a friend and mentor. Always kind, always sincere, always focused. To our entire community in Houston, he will be greatly missed. My deepest sympathies to the entire Neumann family.

And that's just the way it is.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit an explanation for my absence during legislative business on the evening of Monday, September 8 and Tuesday, September 9. On these two days, I was in my district hosting the United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Julian Castro during their visit to the 7th Congressional District of Alabama. I hosted Secretary Duncan for a stop in Birmingham on his 5th Annual Back-to-School Bus Tour. We met with community leaders, educators, parents, and other education advocates in Alabama to showcase reforms and investments the Department has made in Birmingham and across the State of Alabama. Secretary Castro joined me on his first visit to the 7th District since being sworn in as the HUD Secretary. During their visit, the cabinet secretaries and I participated in a "My Brother's Keeper" panel discussion at Phillips Academy which was attended by community leaders, educators, and many bright young students from throughout Birmingham.

Considered and passed by the House during my absence was H. Res. 644, a resolution condemning President Obama for the exchange of five Guantanamo Bay prisoners for the release of Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl. I would like to state for the record that I supported President Obama's decision to act swiftly and exercise his constitutional responsibility as Commander-in-Chief to protect the lives of U.S. service members. Furthermore, I agree with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who unanimously supported the exchange, along with Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel. The United States has a sacred obligation when sending our service men and women onto the field of battle with the assurance that we will honor their sacrifice by leaving no one behind. Army General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, said the swap was "likely our last, best opportunity" to free Sergeant Bergdahl.

The timing of this condemnation was also particularly poor. The debate and vote coincided with a meeting in which the President discussed his strategy to confront ISIS with House and Senate leaders at the White House and a day before his address to the nation. At a time when the President needs Congressional support in rallying international support to combat the rising threat of Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria, I believe the timing of this vote was counter to our national interests. I am disappointed that House Republicans chose such inappropriate timing to conduct their political gamesmanship.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF  
OFFICER ROBERT BUENDIA

HON. SUZAN K. DELBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 2014

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Robert Buendia of the Bothell Police Department. Officer Buendia was recently awarded the prestigious 2014 Crisis Intervention Team Officer of the Year Award, which recognizes outstanding work by police officers in the safe and effective use of crisis intervention techniques in response to mental health crises.

Officer Buendia received this award in part because of his quick and skilled response to a situation involving a suicidal woman. This woman was a recent victim of sexual assault who became upset after learning that the court case against her attacker did not have sufficient evidence for prosecution. When this woman threatened to end her own life, Officer Buendia used his training, intelligence and quick thinking to defuse this potentially tragic situation. He was able to open a dialogue with the woman, and was eventually able to convince her to come out of her apartment.

The outstanding actions of Officer Buendia are emblematic of the heroism that the members of the Bothell Police Department, and all our first responders in the 1st Congressional District, exhibit every day while serving our communities. I am incredibly thankful for the dedication of these public servants.

I want to thank Officer Robert Buendia for his commitment to serving the people of Bothell, and offer my congratulations on this recognition of his work.

DR. ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

HON. E. SCOTT RIGELL

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 2014

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from an extraordinary experience in July, 2014 in Israel, the land I first came to in 1949 at the tender age of three and a half, already a refugee, from post-World War II Europe. Yet nothing could have prepared me for the surrealistic reality of approaching rockets and wailing sirens, a frightful scenario that Israeli citizens of all ages in its south have had to contend with for fourteen long years, with only fifteen seconds to find protective shelter. I will long remember being awakened